

# **TITLE:UNNATURAL DEATHS**

## **OCCURRING NATURALLY THROUGH**

## **CARDIAC ARREST**

**RUNNING TITLE: THE STUDY OF NATURAL DEATH**

### **ABSTRACT**

In Indian mythology, death is considered as a divine thing i.e., meeting of spirit to the god. But when we come to the scientific aspect of death, it means end of life. Black's law dictionary describes death as cessation of life. It says ceasing to exist in real means is death. Death is further divided into natural and unnatural. Natural death is a death due to means of nature or due to some disease, whereas unnatural death is when the reason of death is either the other person or the person somehow himself. It is difficult to differentiate between the natural and unnatural deaths in various cases, but evolution of forensic science and medical sciences has made it quite clear. The term natural death also consists of the term sudden death in it. Sudden death is precisely defined in the paper. One of the possibilities of natural death, among all, is cardiovascular disease which is the cause of highest number of natural and sudden deaths. But the question comes whether such can be mimicked? The paper consists of a person dying naturally through unnatural means which is, a person seems to dies naturally but it was a cold blooded murder which gone undetected. The method of collecting data is secondary and is being collected from books and internet.

**KEY WORDS:** Body, Causing, Cease, Death, Natural

## INTRODUCTION

Death is end of life i.e. when soul leaves the body. Literal meaning of death includes the action or fact of dying or being killed, or the end of a person or organism, or the state of being dead, or the permanent ending of vital processes in a cell or tissue. But if we come to the legal part, Indian law defines death as the permanent disappearance of all evidence of life at any time after live birth has taken place<sup>1</sup>. If we further go to define the very concept of death, it means cessation of life<sup>2</sup> or as per a physician; death is a total stoppage of various body systems which include lungs, heart and brain due to which sign of life cease to exist in a body. These 3 organs are independent of each other in functional ways and can stop working due to independent causes as well.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The data is being collected from various sites and books and no practical aspect has been involved in collecting data. Basically, it is a compilation of various data available on the internet and books (Doctrinal research). Various books and sites have been read thoroughly and the paper is being written.

## DEATH AND FORENSIC SCIENCE

It was difficult to tell whether a person is dead or not in early ages. Previously there were just physical methods to detect whether a person is dead or not. There was no such thing like stethoscope or heart pacers to pronounce a person as dead or alive. In early ages, People used to fear of being burnt alive while their heartbeat is very low or not hearable through physical analysis. So accordingly, sleeping too much was just not injurious to health but also questionable to life and existence. But after evolution of medical sciences and introduction of forensic sciences it has become more realistic and righteous in methods and conduct. The development of forensic science doesn't only pronounce a person dead but also tells the reason, method, mode, kind of death. Now, forensic science has empowered the prosecution to identify the culprit with more authentic and scientific methods.

## DEATH AND ITS KINDS

The kinds of death are given as follows:

- **Natural Death**

Natural death, as the name suggests, is death occurring in the course of nature and from natural causes. Natural causes may include age or some disease like cancer, heart attack, brain death, etc. Also, natural death is something which is not an accident, homicide, suicides, medical error, drug overdose, trauma and poisoning.

- **Unnatural Death**

Unnatural death means death due to suicide, accident or homicide. It basically means death in which reason of death is either some other person or the person inflicting such injuries on himself so as to

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<sup>1</sup>S.2 (b), Registration of Birth and Deaths Act, 1969

<sup>2</sup>Black law's Dictionary

result in death. The unnatural nature of death is basically which doesn't include the factor of age or disease.

## **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NATURAL DEATH AND UNNATURAL DEATH**

What makes natural death differ from unnatural death is the manner of death of a person. Manner of death determination broadly includes every category from homicide to any disease. A person died due to some illness which is not due to any other person's negligence or died due to an old age, such will be called naturally died and not unnatural form of death. The suspicion in death arises when the person died due to assistance of another person or object planted by other person, which may or may not be evident to a layman but to a forensic expert. Conclusively, the basic difference is the manifestation of another person in the manner of death of a person.

## **SUDDEN DEATH AND NATURAL DEATH**

The concept of natural death also includes the concept of sudden death. The term sudden death refers to the sudden and unexpected deaths in which external examination often fails to depict the cause of death, majority of which are called Natural deaths. But the legal investigation arises in the condition where unexpectedly a healthy person dies suddenly. This arises suspicion among the people regarding such deaths. Somehow in such situation, autopsy has revealed it to be a natural death due to association disease like trauma due to flow of extreme emotions, excitement, etc. which may or may not include a villainy.

## **CAUSES OF NATURAL DEATH**

Various may be causes of sudden and natural death of a person:

- **Cardiovascular Causes**

Situation when the heart ceases to function due to stoppage of flow of blood in the heart or incapacity of the heart to pump the blood into the body, causing death of a person. This is the major cause of natural death, says researches.

- **Respiratory Causes**

Situation when the lungs cease to function in the pre-determined manner resulting in cut off of supply of oxygen in the body, causing death of a person. Cut off in the supply of oxygen in a human body may cause permanent or temporary brain damage. Also, the contractions in heart while pumping may remain intact, affecting the flow of blood to other organs.

- **Gastrointestinal Causes**

Bleeding due to the occurrence of hole in the abdominal system resulting in the death of the person is termed as gastrointestinal diseases. It may happen due to various diseases in abdomen like ulcers, gallbladder infections, gallbladder stones, inflammatory bowel diseases, etc.

- **Central Nervous System**

It refers to a situation where a person dies due to cessation of the nervous system of a person causing failure in the functioning of brain or spinal cord. It may happen due to trauma, any sort of infection or disease in the nerves of the body, degeneration of spinal cord, paralysis, etc. Basically, it means the failure of brain resulting in the failure of entire body system, which ends in death of a person.

- **Genitourinary and Miscellaneous Causes**

The urinary organ, that discharges the wastes of the body, starts producing some poisonous substances which creates chaos in the body and ultimately death of a person. It also includes malfunctioning of reproductive organs like tumours in uterus, etc. which result in cessation of life. Miscellaneous causes include failure of other organs of the body or insertion of any unnecessary function in the body which results in massive disturbance in the body.

## **NATURAL DEATH DUE TO CARDIAC ARREST**

Cardiovascular arrest occurs when the rhythm of heart changes. It may occur due to various reasons like blockage in the veins of heart or weakening of muscles of the heart making it unable to pump blood or lack of oxygen in the heart or irregular and massive increase in heart rate due to fear, excitement, etc. or heart rate gets massively slower in an unusual manner. Such may cause death of a person due to cardiovascular disease.

Think of a situation where such reasons are caused to a person deliberately but a medical practitioner on physical examination could pronounce it to be natural death. So basically, it would be a murder through cardiac arrest pretending to a natural death. The culprit is utterly undetectable here or it could be said that the crime is undetectable here. Further given in the research paper, are some of those poisons or methods which causes silent death of a person during leaving the crime concealed and criminal hidden.

## **UNNATURAL WAY OF DYING NATURALLY**

What if a person dies due to heart attack in an unnatural way but goes undetectable to the medical persons? In such types of crime, it requires a high level of expertise to unveil the truth. Similar to the situation of this crime, some of the dangerous substances are given below which neither leaves the traces nor can be recognized with bare eyes. Also, such can only and only be spotted by a detailed autopsy because the only sign of dying is cardiac arrest.

### **1. Calcium Gluconate**

One of the fatal weapons is the drug called Calcium Gluconate. Medically it is used to treat those patients who have an increased level of Potassium in blood. Injecting Calcium gluconate imbalances the level of sodium and potassium in the body which slows down the heart rate vigorously, eventually creating a heart attack. The person being injected such would first undergo with various symptoms like redness in skin, excess sweating, nausea, vomiting and highly irregularities in heart rate.

The body secretes the very two substance, present in the drug and yet it is nearly impossible to detect an overdose in the body. The forensic specialist, after a deep analysis, can only tell regarding an overdose in the body. Rest, it will be just a prearranged natural death or an undetectable murder.

## **2. Potassium chloride**

It's a treatment drug for those who have low level of potassium in the body. That may be one of the reasons it is a fatal hidden weapon. As one may think what that is in your body can also kill your body with an overdose. The drug is being injected in the human body after which it metabolizes the components potassium and chloride separately. After that comes a fatal heart attack with sudden death which is also called as SCD i.e. Sudden Cardiac Death. It is nearly impossible to find traces in the body of such substance. The professionals, during autopsy can not figure out an overdose of potassium chloride in the deceased's body. Reason being that our body secretes potassium while a muscle is broken or ruptured so, differentiating between the natural secretion and injected drug would not be possible. Hence, it is pre planned and well-planned natural death.

## **3. VAE (Vascular Air Embolism)**

VAE is a method of blocking the veins in the body through an air bubble. It is considered to be one of the most fatal weapons to kill a person. A syringe is all one requires which is easily available at any medical shop. An empty syringe is being injected in the person creating an air bubble. That air bubble creates blockage in the veins due which the blood circulation stops which affects the lungs or heart of a person. The death occurs either due to fatal heart attack or due to respiratory failure. Symptoms before dying are exactly similar that of a heart attack or a respiratory failure.

One need to create a huge bubble for quick results. As per some doctors, a bubble requires to be the size of around 150 to 250ccs. Also, such is not detectable by a normal medical practitioner in normal course of examination. The cause of death will only be revealed if the professional is looking for the same.

## **4. Digitalis**

It is a kind of herb. It is a cumulative poison. The gets synthesis in various by products like digitoxin, digoxin, digitalin, etc. among which digitalin and digitoxin is important in order to cause death of a person. It lengthens the diastolic period of the heart. It leaves no traces in the post mortem reports. No medical person can detect it unless and until he/she knows the symptoms before death. The symptoms of the drug are, nausea, pain in the abdomen, burning sensation, vomiting, irregular pulse, slowing of respiration, convulsions. The person after consuming this may die within few hours.

Fatal Dose: 2mg of digitoxin is sufficient to cause death of a person.

## **5. Aconite**

Aconite is an herb actually; it is not a drug in literal sense. This is genuinely a fatal drug which may cause death to a person. It has about 24 species and can be found in India as well. It is hard to differentiate other plants from this one so it could be consumed as food which is dangerous. Symptoms of such are tingling, itchiness, numbness, pain in abdomen, constrictions in the throat, loss of speech, hiccups, etc. also the death will be due to cardiac or respiratory failure. The person may die in 45 minutes to 24 hours. Again, this is undetectable in the postmortem if it is given in the natural state

which may either boil in the water or in any eatable substance. Also, it decomposes in the body so quickly that till the time of postmortem it may have disappeared.

Fatal dose: 1gm of roots or 250 mg of extracts of the plant.

#### **6. Nicotine**

Nicotine is a next level drug which is found in Nicotine products like cigarettes, tobacco, Vaping (e-cigarettes/liquid smoking). This is highly injurious to health, as what all the advertisements and journals say. This drug is of addictive nature and may affect in long passage of time as well i.e. no immediate results. Having consumed pure form of nicotine or large amount may cause death of a person. But as mentioned in previous drugs also, overdosing nicotine may end up in death. Overdose of nicotine mimics heart attack to a person. The person overdosing nicotine may have symptoms like nausea, increase in the heart rate, vomiting, increased blood pressure, dehydration, loss of appetite, headaches, etc. This kind of drug would go finely undetected in cases where people are nicotine consumers on general basis. Nicotine given to a person who doesn't consume addictive substances may raise suspicion.

Fatal Dose: 40mg of nicotine is sufficient to cause death.

## **CONCLUSION**

Natural death is a tough concept to determine. This kind of a death has a hidden suspicion in it. One may or may not raise questions of suspicion on some probability basis. One needs to have a thorough analysis in order to elevate suspicion. The concept has various technicalities to deal with. Also, all-natural deaths do not go for autopsy so the death remains undetected of unnatural causes. Natural death of an aged person or an ill person does not lead to suspicion at all. It is taken in a very obvious manner that the person must have died naturally. The foul play does not seem to appear in such cases. Hereby it is no obligation that the death occurred naturally may actually be the most natural one. Above mentioned drugs are some of the hidden and fatal murder weapons which leaves no trace behind. The person seems to die naturally even the postmortem would pronounce it so but it may have died with all planning and plotting. This is the very point where the concepts of forensic science failed and the person remained without justice.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

With the mentioning of above drugs, the medical science needs to evolve some new methods to detect them and lock the culprit behind the bars. Evolution in forensic science can only solve the conspicuous murders mysteries. It cannot be said that all-natural deaths are actually murder but many murders go undetected due to the angle of natural death in it. Situations mentioned above are those where culprit with hands in blood live in the society with all ease and would not even get suspected. The deceased person once cremated; the evidences end within itself. Hence, there is a requirement of some advancements in medical sciences to cover these hidden pit holes.

So, ending with a note that what seems like may not what happens actually, wonders are everywhere.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

No Conflict of Interest associated with this work.

**CONTRIBUTION OF AUTHOR:**

I declare that this work was done by the author named in this article and all liabilities pertaining to claims relating to the content of this article will be borne by the author. The author herself did all researches regarding the paper and prepared it.

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